

is a choice that should be made by a woman and her doctor, and not by politicians in Washington, D.C.

That is not just my opinion, that is the opinion of the United States Supreme Court in the *Stenberg v. Carhart* opinion dated June 28, 2000. In that indication, the Supreme Court and its majority of justices made it very clear that the Nebraska partial-birth abortion law was unconstitutional, in these words.

"... Because it lacks an exception for those instances when the banned procedure is necessary to preserve the health of the mother."

That is as clear as the English language can be. Justice O'Connor, the swing vote on this issue, has made it clear. The truth is that with no health exception for a woman, there will be no law; no law, not one baby saved.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has two flaws in it that make it little more than politics at its worst, as Ralph Reed said, a political silver bullet. First, it is unconstitutional, therefore meaningless. It is a false promise. Second, if the authors of this bill truly believe that American women are monsters who would take a perfectly healthy baby seconds before a perfectly healthy child birth and puncture its brain and kill that innocent child, then why is it that they just want to outlaw one procedure? If you assume the woman is that kind of a monster, then under this bill even if it were law and were constitutional, which it is not, then the woman could choose to use other late-term abortion procedures. Once again, a meaningless law, a meaningless bill that will not save one baby's life.

I think the people who should really be offended by this bill are those genuine pro-life Americans who want to stop late-term abortions. I want to stop late-term abortions, and I hope others who do would ask the proponents of this bill two questions. Is politics so important that you would rather pass a clearly unconstitutional bill than a bill that could actually become law, a bill like I helped pass in Texas 15 years ago that is still the law of that State today? Second question: Why are you outlawing one procedure and leaving every other late-term abortion procedure perfectly legal?

This bill is politics at its worst. It is a false promise.

COMMEMORATION OF RETIREMENT OF MRS. MYRNA DECKERT

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 5, 2002

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the retirement of one of the most inspirational and respected women in El Paso, Texas: Mrs. Myrna Deckert. Mrs. Deckert represents the highest caliber of citizen we have in the United States. Since the early 1960s, she has been a motivating force in the improvement of her workplace, the YWCA El Paso, and as a result, the El Paso community as a whole. We are lucky to have someone with her rare mix of business savvy and empathy in our midst and I am proud to honor her today in the United States Congress.

Myrna's service to El Paso began with her position as Teenage Director at the YWCA El

Paso del Norte Region. Myrna quickly displayed her prowess for innovation and improvement as she expanded the Teenage Program from less than 30 members to over 1500 members and vastly improved the services offered. She then moved up to become the Associate Executive Director of the organization. It is through her efforts in this position that the YWCA captured national attention in *Parade Magazine*. Myrna created a place of respite and support for teenage girls with family problems called the Residential Intervention Center which was so effective that it caught eye of *Parade*, who ran the story as its feature article.

Just one year after assuming the Associate Executive Director post, Myrna was made Chief Executive Officer of the YWCA El Paso del Norte Region. In the ensuing years, it was easy to tell that Myrna was at the helm. With her as head of the organization's 33-member board, the YWCA's operating budget grew from \$100,000 to \$35 million. Their staff grew from about 20 to over 800, and, the YWCA went from one building to numerous facilities valued at over \$20 million.

As CEO, Myrna received numerous awards and recognitions for her efforts. Some highlights—as there are definitely too many to share all of them here—are: the Woman of the Year Award from the American Association of University Women, the Director of the Year Award from the United Way of El Paso County, the Humanitarian Award from the League of United Latin American Citizens, and the "One of the Twenty Outstanding Women of Year Award(s)" from the El Paso Times in 1997. Three years later, the El Paso Times honored her again with one of the two "Newsmaker of the Year" awards in 2000.

While reflecting over this amazing and substantive career, I would like to congratulate Myrna on her retirement and thank her so much for her years of hard work and commitment. Because of her efforts, I represent an area that provides opportunity and enjoyment to its citizens. Myrna, because of your efforts, I represent an area that people are proud to call home. Thank you. I yield back the balance of my time.

GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION MADE TO COMMUNITY PROJECT IN LEXINGTON, MISSOURI

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 5, 2002

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that Margaret Gray of Lexington, Missouri, has donated \$250,000 to a project that will benefit the citizens of Lexington and the surrounding area. The gift will go toward construction of the "Lexington 4 Life" project, a new building that will house a senior citizens' center, a comprehensive health care facility, a day care center, and a pre-school for at-risk children.

Margaret Gray's support for the new "Lexington 4 Life" project is only her most recent commitment to the betterment of Lexington. Through the years, she has promoted aging issues and cultivated a more enhanced public sentiment with regard to the well-being of all persons in her community.

For 25 years, Margaret served the people of Lafayette County and the State of Missouri by working for the Missouri Division of Family Services, the last ten of which serving as the Lafayette County Director. In 1978, Margaret joined a small group of individuals who started the Lexington Senior Center. She served on the local Center Services Board for ten years, before becoming a member of the District III Area Agency on Aging Board of Directors in 1985. She served on the Area Agency on Aging Board for 17 years, including a tenure as President of the Board.

Margaret also served on the State Board of the Missouri Association of Social Workers from 1970 to 1980 and has been an active member of Business and Professional Women for over 40 years. Additionally, Margaret is working with her colleagues to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of the state's Medicaid system.

Mr. Speaker, Margaret Gray's generous gifts, her talents, and her time are making a lifetime endowment to the community of Lexington. I am certain that all members of the House will join me in paying tribute to Margaret Gray's commitment and dedication to the people of Lexington, Missouri.

THE ROBERT BYRD HONORS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS FROM THE 6th DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 5, 2002

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding achievements of the Robert Byrd Honors Scholarship recipients from the 6th district of Missouri. The following students have shown dedication and persistence in their academic studies, and it is my honor to announce them as this year's scholarship award winners:

Matt Arndt, Brianna Belke, Grant Buell, Zachariah Castle, Joseph Gill, Wesley Kauble, Rachel Lipanovich, Kenneth Maynes, Emily McClanahan, Robert Nedved, Adam Osborne, Colby Parks, Kathryn Seyboth, Austin Siddens, Erin Smith, Eric Sokol, Lauren Spencer, Matthew Tingle and Justin Wilson. Each student was awarded scholarships of up to \$1500 per year for their first four years of study at a four-year institution of higher education.

The Robert C. Byrd Scholarship Program is a federally funded scholarship for students who show outstanding academic achievement and promise. The department of elementary and secondary education, in cooperation with the United States Department of Education, provides superior scholars throughout the Nation with this esteemed award. In order to receive the scholarship, students must be a resident of Missouri and attend a public or private school within the State, be accepted for enrollment at a four-year institution of higher education, rank in the top 10% of their high school graduating class and score in the top 10% of the national percentile on the ACT test. It is my honor and privilege to have 19 of these scholars residing in the 6th district.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring these exceptional scholars for their dedication to and achievement in their academic studies.